

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KATHMA 04486 291021Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00
/051 W

-----002347 300035Z /14

R 290921Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3133
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 4486

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, IN, NP
SUBJECT: VISIT OF INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER VAJPAYEE TO NEPAL

REF: NEW DELHI 13058

1. LOCAL PRESS CARRIED REPORT AUGUST 28 OF BRIEF
TWO-DAY VISIT OF INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER VAJPAYEE
TO KATHMANDU STARTING EITHER SEPTEMBER 2 OR 3.
PRESS NOTED THAT THIS WOULD BE VAJPAYEE'S THIRD
VISIT TO NEPAL SINCE JANATA PARTY CAME TO POWER.
REASON ADVANCED PUBLICLY BY INDIAN EMBASSY FOR
TRIP IS THAT THIS IS ANOTHER EFFORT BY GOI AND
VAJPAYEE TO KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH INDIA'S IMMEDIATE
NEIGHBORS FOR INFORMAL AND FRIENDLY DISCUSSIONS.

2. INDIAN AMBASSADOR MENON MORE CONFIDENTIALLY
TELLS US THAT VAJPAYEE'S VISIT AT THIS PARTICULAR
TIME IS PROMPTED BY DOMESTIC POLITICAL
CONSIDERATIONS AND DEMANDS IN UP AND BIHAR TO
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PAGE 02 KATHMA 04486 291021Z

DO SOMETHING ABOUT DEVASTATING AND WIDESPREAD
FLOODS CAUSED BY RIVERS FROM NEPAL FLOWING INTO
THESE TWO STATES. ACCORDING TO MENON, CHIEF
MINISTERS OF UP AND BIHAR RECENTLY WENT TO
DELHI TO DEMAND ACTION, POINTING OUT THAT
DEVASTATION IS GETTING WORSE EACH YEAR AND WAS
PARTICULARLY SEVERE THIS YEAR. MENON

ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE IS LITTLE THAT CAN BE DONE IN SHORT RUN TO ALLEVIATE SITUATION, BUT VAJPAYEE HOPES TO INJECT GREATER SENSE OF URGENCY INTO TALKS UNDER WAY BETWEEN BOTH GOVERNMENTS ON SEVERAL FLOOD CONTROL SCHEMES AND TO EXPLORE ESTABLISHMENT OF EARLY FLOOD WARNING SYSTEM.

3. WHEN WE MENTIONED TO MENON THAT BANGLADESH SEEMED TO HAVE SOME OF SAME CONCERNS AND ALSO APPEARED TO BE INTERESTED IN FLOOD WARNING SYSTEM AND THAT THERE MIGHT BE MERIT IN REGIONAL APPROACH TO PROBLEM, HE FIRMLY REJECTED SUGGESTION WITH COMMENT THAT BANGLADESH'S NEEDS AND PROBLEMS WERE FAR DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF INDIAN STATES BORDERING ON NEPAL.

4. COMMENT: AS SEEN FROM KATHMANDU, GOI CONTINUES TO BE STRONGLY WEDDED TO BILATERAL RATHER THAN REGIONAL APPROACH TO PROBLEMS CAUSED BY NEPAL'S RIVERS. HOWEVER, LOGIC OF SITUATION MAY EVENTUALLY FORCE INDIA TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM REGIONALLY; GON WOULD WELCOME THIS DEVELOPMENT.
HECK

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